

**Remarks:**

1. Objections and Rejections.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation that the Examiner has allowed claims 1 and 3-7 and indicates that claim 15 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include the limitations of its base claim, claim 9, and the intervening claims, claims 10-14. Nevertheless, claims 9-11, 13, and 14 now stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,139,273 to Schwarz et al. (“Schwartz”) and claim 12 now stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly rendered obvious by Schwarz, as applied to claim 9, in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,900,228 to Yapp. Applicant respectfully traverses.

2. Anticipation Rejections.

Claims 9-11, 13, and 14 stand rejected as allegedly anticipated by Schwarz. “A claim is anticipated if and only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference. [Moreover, ‘t]he identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim.” MPEP 2131 (emphasis added; citations omitted). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant has amended claims 9 to include the limitations of claims 10, 11, and 13-15. Because claim 15 contains allowable subject matter, amended claim 9 now is allowable. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the anticipation rejections of claims 9-11, 13, and 14.

3. Obviousness Rejection.

Claim 12 stands rejected as allegedly rendered obvious by Schwarz in view of Yapp. Although claims 13-15 were dependent from claim 12, claims 13 and 14 only are subject to the Examiner’s anticipation rejections. Therefore, Applicant has not amended claim 9 to include the limitations of claim 12, and claim 12 is amended to depend from amended claim 9. “If an independent claim is non-obvious under 35 U.S.C. 103, then any claim dependent therefrom is non obvious.” MPEP 2143.03. Thus, in view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, and because the Office Action does not contend that the elements described above which are missing from Schwartz are supplied by Yapp, Applicant maintains

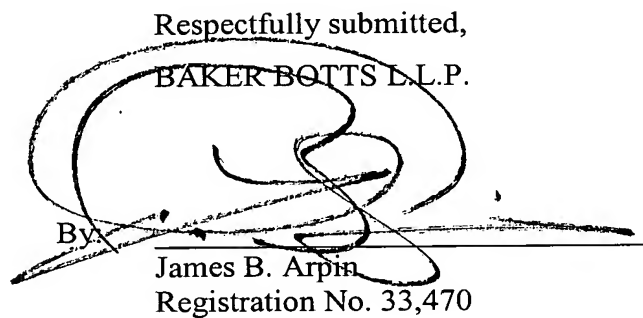
that the obviousness rejection of claim 12 is untenable, Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the obviousness rejection of claim 12.

**Conclusion:**

Applicant maintains that the above-captioned patent application, as amended, now is in condition for allowance, and such disposition is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that the prosecution of this application may be furthered by discussing the application, in person or by telephone, with Applicant's representative, we would welcome the opportunity to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 9, 2005

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Enclosures